

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Transco Products Inc

#### Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

#### Streator Manufacturer Re-tooling For The Future

##### Client Profile:

Transco Products Inc. manufactures a wide variety of products dealing with the nuclear industry and its safety. The company's products include penetration seals and raceway fire barriers, removable blanket insulation, specialized fabrication, metal reflective insulation, encapsulated insulation, and insulation for steam generator replacements. Transco is located in Streator, Illinois, and currently employs 50 people.

##### Situation:

As the nearly exclusive supplier of specialized thermal insulation systems for the commercial nuclear power industry, Transco Products Inc. has enjoyed a market advantage unknown to U.S. manufacturers sapped by foreign competition and price reduction pressures. However, with major retrofit projects upon which Transco has built its core business ending in 2010, and construction of new nuclear power plants in the U.S. still an uncertainty out on the horizon, creating a culture of change and growth has taken on new meaning at this 68-year-old Illinois company.

Transco President Ed Wolbert and his team have begun crafting an ambitious plan to leverage Transco's extensive capabilities in the metal forming, welding and fabrication business to compete in new markets. "We know we're good at manufacturing, but we've never really had to systematically measure the performance of the enterprise," said Wolbert. "If we're going to compete in collateral markets, we will have to get a handle on our cost structure. Being in a niche market has been profitable, but we have a window of opportunity to find out where the inefficiencies are and get better." Transco is re-tooling the entire factory, starting first by replacing an outdated, homegrown manufacturing information system. Wolbert called on the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, Information Technology team to help identify ERP/MRP packages to fit the needs of the company.

##### Solution:

IMEC and Transco are implementing the new system with expected completion in early 2005. Wolbert sees the information system upgrade as a foundation for his diversification strategy. "It's clear to everyone what's going to happen to our nuclear power business in 2010. We have to prepare now to be competitive in other sectors. I think we're up to the challenge."

##### Results:

- \* Estimated \$400,000 in productivity increases and cost savings.
- \* Created 8 to 10 new jobs.

##### Testimonial:

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"In some respects, we're catching up to where modernized manufacturing companies are now. It starts with the basics, generating real-time performance data and detailed bill of materials. IMEC's expertise has been invaluable, especially in helping our workforce understand how to utilize the data to increase productivity."

Ed Wolbert, President